

§ 3.56

CROSS REFERENCES: Evidence. See §§3.206 and 3.207. Termination of marital relationship or conduct. See §3.215.

§ 3.56 [Reserved]

§ 3.57 Child.

(a) *General.* (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section, the term *child* of the veteran means an unmarried person who is a legitimate child, a child legally adopted before the age of 18 years, a stepchild who acquired that status before the age of 18 years and who is a member of the veteran's household or was a member of the veteran's household at the time of the veteran's death, or an illegitimate child; and

(i) Who is under the age of 18 years; or

(ii) Who, before reaching the age of 18 years, became permanently incapable of self-support; or

(iii) Who, after reaching the age of 18 years and until completion of education or training (but not after reaching the age of 23 years) is pursuing a course of instruction at an approved educational institution. For the purposes of this section and §3.667, the term "educational institution" means a permanent organization that offers courses of instruction to a group of students who meet its enrollment criteria. The term includes schools, colleges, academies, seminaries, technical institutes, and universities, but does not include home-school programs.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(4)(A), 104(a))

(2) For the purposes of determining entitlement of benefits based on a child's school attendance, the term *child* of the veteran also includes the following unmarried persons:

(i) A person who was adopted by the veteran between the ages of 18 and 23 years.

(ii) A person who became a stepchild of the veteran between the ages of 18 and 23 years and who is a member of the veteran's household or was a member of the veteran's household at the time of the veteran's death.

(3) Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c) and (e) of this section, the term *child* also includes a person who became permanently incapable of self-

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support before reaching the age of 18 years, who was a member of the veteran's household at the time he or she became 18 years of age, and who was adopted by the veteran, regardless of the age of such person at the time of adoption.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(4)(A))

(b) *Stepchild.* The term means a legitimate or an illegitimate child of the veteran's spouse. A child of a surviving spouse whose marriage to the veteran is deemed valid under the provisions of §3.52, and who otherwise meets the requirements of this section is included.

(c) *Adopted child.* Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, the term means a child adopted pursuant to a final decree of adoption, a child adopted pursuant to an unrescinded interlocutory decree of adoption while remaining in the custody of the adopting parent (or parents) during the interlocutory period, and a child who has been placed for adoption under an agreement entered into by the adopting parent (or parents) with any agency authorized under law to so act, unless and until such agreement is terminated, while the child remains in the custody of the adopting parent (or parents) during the period of placement for adoption under such agreement. The term includes, as of the date of death of a veteran, such a child who:

(1) Was living in the veteran's household at the time of the veteran's death, and

(2) Was adopted by the veteran's spouse under a decree issued within 2 years after August 25, 1959, or the veteran's death whichever is later, and

(3) Was not receiving from an individual other than the veteran or the veteran's spouse, or from a welfare organization which furnishes services or assistance for children, recurring contributions of sufficient size to constitute the major portion of the child's support.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(4))

(d) Definition of *child custody*. The provisions of this paragraph are for the purpose of determining entitlement to improved pension under §§3.23 and 3.24.

(1) Custody of a child shall be considered to rest with a veteran, surviving